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Office of Communications
2850 Youngfield Street
Lakewood, CO 80215

BLM News Release

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**Denise Adamic
Fran Ackley
Ken Smith**

**BLM 303-239-3671
BLM 719-269-8511
BLM 719-269-8553**

WILD HORSE INMATE PROGRAM CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

The Colorado Wild Horse Inmate Program (WHIP) is celebrating 20 years at the Canon City Correctional Facility. As part of the celebration, they are hosting an adoption and other activities which begin at 9:00 a.m. on May 6, 2006 at the Broken Spoke Event Center in Penrose, CO.

The WHIP program, the first and largest of its kind in the country, is a partnership between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Colorado Correctional Industries that provides inmates opportunities to train mustangs.

“Since the program began in 1986, minimum security inmates have worked with wild horses to make the dream of owning a mustang a reality for many people,” said Fran Ackley, Wild Horse and Burro Program Lead for the BLM.

Anniversary festivities will include a performance at 10:30 a.m. by the Westernaires, a youth precision riding team from Jefferson County. The group has adopted nearly 50 animals from WHIP, and some of these mustangs will perform at the event. A parade featuring past adopters and their animals will follow the Westernaires’ show. The silent bid adoption will begin at 3:45 p.m. with drawings to win two mustangs.

The adoption will feature 50 of the 900 animals currently in the Wild Horse Inmate Program. Adopters may choose from saddle and halter trained mustangs and burros, or untrained geldings, mares, stallions, and yearlings. Each adopted animal will receive a special edition halter commemorating the 20th anniversary.

In the last 20 years, nearly 4,000 mustangs and burros have been adopted from the Canon City Correctional facility, home of WHIP.

For more information, a schedule of events or to preview some of the animals available for adoption, please visit www.cijvp.com and click on “wild horse program.” For further information about this event or the wild horse and burro program, please call the BLM Royal Gorge Field Office at 719-269-8539.

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